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tion of this idea is found in the fact that in *S. crassifolia* an abnormal increase in the number of pistils has been repeatedly observed.

The few conjectures in which I have indulged are confessedly mere speculation, and perhaps quite erroneous. However this may be, all botanists, I am sure, will agree that it will be well worth while to examine with special attention any apetalous *Saxifragæ* that may hereafter be detected.

E. E. STERNS.

The Lateral Lines in the Leaf of *Erythroxylon Coca*.

Commenting on the remarks of Prof. Schrenk, elsewhere indexed, the writer would present the following observations on these lines, made during an extended study of the living plant:

The leaf is longitudinally folded in the bud, the two lateral lines supporting the folds below, and the midrib and free borders of the leaf forming the upper edge of the bud. It does not necessarily follow that the lines are caused by the folding. The office of strengthening-tissues at such a point is obvious. It has long been accepted by importers that the prominence of these lines, and their proximity to the midrib, are characteristic of the quality of the leaf as a drug. As to the first part of this rule, it is borne out by the statements of the natives who chew the leaves. They select in preference a leaf exhibiting strongly pronounced lines; but I could not learn that their proximity to the midrib was at all considered by these people. Conditions of growth produce the greatest variation in the appearance of the leaf, particularly as to these lines, and a corresponding degree of difference in the amount of alkaloids contained. As soon as a plant escapes from cultivation the leaves deteriorate, and the lines grow fainter until they disappear altogether. If the plant escape to a "pajinal," as the bare sunny hillsides are called, the leaves become thick and pubescent; while if it escape to the deep forest they vary in the opposite direction, becoming large, pale, thin and flabby; but in either case the lines lose their prominence. I have extreme specimens of both these forms, with scarcely a trace of any lines, and in which no cocaine can be detected by the nerves of the tongue. H. H. RUSBY.